

AIR POUCH

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PRIORITY

FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM :

AmEmbassy, HELSINKI

TO :

THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON

REF :

April 18, 1959

DATE

ACTION	DEPT.	OTHER
EUR 5	IN 12	120-8 P-5 S/DWC-1 S/P-1
REC'D	4/16	0 CIA 15 050-4 Army-4 Navy-3 Air-3

SUBJECT: Observance of Anniversary of Fenn-Soviet Friendship Treaty OUB-1 U21A-60

The 15th anniversary of the Fenn-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance was observed in Helsinki April 3-7 with about the usual degree of pomp, but the observance was of somewhat more than normal interest in the light of the "crisis" in Fenn-Soviet relations last autumn. The major address of the observances, by Prime Minister Sukselainen,

official Finnish desire to erase the effects of that set-back in both its international and domestic aspects. Editorial comment, although not in the quantity or depth that the speech deserved, was sufficient to recall the fact that strong opinions diverging from that of President Kekkonen persist in all Finnish non-Communist parties.

Prime Minister Sukselainen spoke on April 5 at a convocation in the Communist House of Culture under the sponsorship of the Finland-Soviet Society, together with the principal Soviet visitor, Minister A. P. Volke. Receptions were held on April 6 by the Foreign Minister (on a small scale) and by the Soviet Ambassador. The fact that Sukselainen was not present at the latter, preferring to address a district meeting of the Agrarian Party in Joensuu (Northern Karelia) was not the subject of press comment nor, as far as is known, of any Soviet displeasure. A Finnish delegation headed by Minister of Education Heikki Hosiä was meanwhile visiting Moscow.

Greetings on the occasion were sent to their Soviet counterparts by President Kekkonen, Prime Minister Sukselainen, Foreign Minister Törnågren, Trade Minister Karjalainen and Diet Speaker Fagerholm. In addition, Kekkonen sent a similar but less formal and more personal message to Khrushchev. This practice, which began in the exchange of greetings last New Year's Day, was explained

as recognizing that Khrushchev is "something more than Prime Minister". The operative sentence of Kekkonen's message to Khrushchev read:

"My earnest hope is that sincere friendship, for the strengthening of which the observance in the past ten years of the principles stated in the treaty has had an essential significance, will permanently animate relations between the Finnish and Soviet peoples."

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REPORTER

ACTION COPY: DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The action office must return this permanent record copy to DCA files with an endorsement of action taken.

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From Helsinki

Most of the messages were similar in their mention of friendship, mutual confidence, continuation of good relations in the future--yet unexpected phrases--but all were remarkably parallel in relating references to "friendship" directly to "observance" or "application" of the principles stated in the treaty or comparable phrase. This reminder that Finnish-Soviet relations of the kind now highly extolled rest on continued Soviet good behavior would hardly be noticed by the public but probably was not lost on the Soviets when repeated in still different ways.

Sukkaslahti's speech of April 5 (translated excerpts enclosed) was novel for its emphasis on the benefits to the security of Finland resulting from the 1948 treaty, and particularly for the historical arguments advanced in support of this theme. Drawing a parallel between the "uncertain and dangerous" situation in Europe in 1939 and similar conditions at the present time, Sukkaslahti asserted that the Soviets twenty years ago sought a solution with Finland essentially similar to the 1948 treaty. Lacking the requisite element of mutual confidence, Finland's proclamation of neutrality did not suffice to keep it outside the conflicts of the great powers.

In words very close to those of President Kekkonen on December 10, 1958 when he rejected outside assistance in solving Finland's difficulties with the Soviets, Sukkaslahti said that the treaty had put Finland outside the spectrum of great power politics, thus permitting pursuit of a neutral course which is presently known to all. At the same time, he said, Finland participates in Nordic collaboration "without reservations" and in ways that are "clearer and more varied than ever before". Minister Hosi's speech in Moscow evidently contained some of the same phrases as Sukkaslahti's, pointing to the probability that they were both carefully drafted for their effects on the Soviets.

Sukkaslahti mentioned only in passing the recalls posted in Finnish-Soviet relations last fall, to say that it was (1) regrettable, (2) past and (3) demonstrated the "wise" nature of the 1948 treaty to Finland's security. His and other subsequent Agrarian statements related to the problem of forming a majority government in Finland, however, indicate lingering doubts--possibly self-starting--that the crisis is completely past. On April 6 in Jyväskylä, for example, the Prime Minister said any plan for a new government presupposing Agrarian participation should "abandon" at this stage be declined, because we cannot yet see the kind of clearing (of the skies) that, in our opinion, is required in our circumstances. This apprehension was reflected also in the editorial in Agrarian MAAILMA of April 8 (excerpts enclosed), which noted repeated Soviet references to the autumn coolness. The latest of these, a FINNISH article concerning the treaty anniversary, was cited as an example.

The speech of Minister Volke on April 5 had also referred to the autumn difficulties (excerpt enclosed) in order to recall that there were still enemies of Finnish-Soviet friendship in Finland, and outside its borders.

Volke's remark was only a briefer version of

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part of a HEALDA article on April 6, re-distributed in Finland by the Soviet Information Bureau, saying that "own circles in Finland and abroad would like to make some change in this policy of peace: a friendship with the Soviet Union, to some suspicion toward the Soviet Union and push the country back on a dangerous path." Friendship of West Germany by Finnish reactionaries led to the Fagerholm Government, and it is turn to a cooling in Fenne-Soviet relations and it was forced to resign by pressure of the broad masses". HELSINKI SANOMAT added the comment after printing this article that in it "unfortunately are repeated misleading claims, which certain quarters here have cultivated for domestic political purposes" but of which the paper thought it unnecessary to speak further.

Head of the Vellner speech was headline, but he took the trouble to acknowledge Kekkonen's role in post-war Finnish foreign policy by remarking: "It is no accident that one speaks now in Finland of the Paasilin-Kekkonen line." He went on to call that policy "an important link in the common chain of the policy of peace-loving states striving for the prevention of war, preservation of world peace and release of international tension". At another point he extolled paracausal vision as a means of improving international understanding, regardless of whether they are organized under auspices of the state, parliamentary institutions or other organizations".

These reactions to Suvelainen's speech was rather meager. In Helsinki, MAALINEN presented what was essentially an elaboration of those parts of the speech that called for extreme care and caution in relations with the Soviets. This is essentially the emphasis of President Kekkonen which, with its attention to the "building of mutual confidence", seems to give the Soviets credit for unaltered innocence and good will, while tending to obscure Suvelainen's unspectacular but vital restoration of Finnish neutrality policy.

Communist EERO VUORIEN had spoken on the subject of Fenne-Soviet relations already on April 7 with a pessimism that even Suvelainen's efforts could hardly eliminate. Somewhat in contradiction of Vellner's later bow to Kekkonen, the paper said:

... without at all minimizing the significance of individual statements, it must nevertheless be noted that the basis of friendly relations as well as their development in the future rests on a much broader and firmer basis. Giving all credit to the working class, the Communist editorial warned that "the favorable continuation of this development is not yet clear in itself. It must be observed that like Fenne-Soviet relations in the field of foreign policy, foreign policy is always closely bound to internal politics."

According to KU, the threat of reactionary government to good Fenne-Soviet relations was most clearly seen during war and pre-war years, "but relations are still so delicate and so strongly does reaction seek the former position that even a Government such as Fagerholm's last one succeeded momentarily by its plans to change foreign policy in bringing relations to the breaking point. For this reason a democratic domestic

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orientation and a cabinet policy resting on broad productive forces - primarily the workers - is continually also a vital condition of successful foreign policy. In this respect the internal political situation at this moment is not the best possible, nor does it fully guarantee that new disturbances will not arise in the future."

Only today resistance was made to the speech of Sukselainen as such, by Conservative JUSSI SUKSI in a somewhat academic discussion of his remarks that Finland had learned about foreign affairs rather belatedly, because prior to 1917 the foreign affairs had come under Russian control. This editorial (translation enclosed) substantiated, in agreement even with many Agrarians, that the Passikeli line had its roots in the 19th century Finnish policy advocated by the Center or the Party of that day, of getting along with the Russians. KANSAIN SUKSEI took sharp issue with this line on April 9, charging that it was merely an effort to say that "Russia is always Russia", whether Soviet or Czarist.

For the Ambassador:

Grant G. Halliker

Grant G. Halliker

First Secretary of Embassy

Enclosures

1. Excerpts from Sukselainen speech
2. Excerpts from Vellay speech
3. MAAKANSI editorial
4. JUSSI SUKSI editorial

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From Helsinki

HELSINKI SANOMAT

April 6, 1959

Speech by Prime Minister V. J. Sukselainen

At Observance of Peace-Soviet Treaty

of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual

Assistance and Victory, April 5, 1959

(excerpt)

... In building our country from the destruction of war, we Finns have little by little learned something to which we little attention was paid in the first decades of our independence. We learned how to think in terms of foreign policy.

... The Finnish people got their political training proper in the period of autonomy (1918-1919), when we did not have and were not permitted to have our own foreign policy. A sense of responsibility in foreign policy thus came to develop here later than political responsibility generally. In this we lagged behind and we had to pay a high price for it.

... We can be glad that in the post-war years we found the right foreign policy, for which we have been able to work now more than ten years and the plans of which are a national foreign policy in this time so firm that no one can any longer shake it.

... From the treaty of 1947 it has not been necessary to eliminate anything, nor has anything had to be added to it. Moreover, it is an example of how, in this unsettled world, it is possible permanently to arrange relations between a great power and its smaller neighbor, so that the interests of both are protected and yet each holds fast to its social system and political forms based on historical experience and to its sovereignty, without its preventing tolerance and a correct attitude toward its neighbor.

... We cannot efface our eyes, however, to the fact that during the period between these two visits of President Kekkonen to the USSR we experienced, in our relations with the Soviet Union, a phase which in the final accounting must be written on the debit side. Fortunately that period is over, but it is all the more important to recall the prime importance of the Friendship Agreement to our relations with the neighbor, as well as to the national security in general.

The content of the treaty has recently become clearer to us than before. For the surprising ones who by seeking have found in it hidden meanings, recent events have indisputably shown that by Friendship, cooperation and mutual assistance the treaty means just what is stated in it. We have seen that our neighbors logically and unconditionally base their attitude on the principles of the treaty. It is our own affair to demonstrate with assurance that we act just as logical and unconditionally.

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It is an enduring, an agreement between two countries that rest on the firm basis of mutual interest. The desirability of the friendship treaty for Finland is a matter which is obvious and self-evident to everyone. But for its conclusion it may be worth recalling certain events of twenty years ago. Then in 1939 negotiations were in progress between the Finnish and Soviet Governments on just these questions that are dealt with in the present friendship treaty. The situation in Europe was then as alive as at this moment--uncertain and dangerous, and the Soviet Union already then sought in its relations with us the kind of solution which, in the essentials, resembles the central idea of the friendship treaty. The negotiations were nevertheless without result. In Finland it was believed that proclamation of neutrality would suffice to save us from the conflicts of great powers. But one essential prerequisite of success was lacking from our policy; it did not rest on mutual confidence among countries. And the consequences of lack of confidence were tragic.

Now as a result of more than ten years of determined activity we have created a new, more enduring basis for our relations, a foundation of mutual confidence. This is in itself such a precious political instrument for us, that we can never outgrow it. It is just as important nowadays as it was twenty years ago that our intentions and our efforts are unconditionally trusted. These intentions and efforts find expression also in that treaty which we celebrate here.

Experience has shown that this treaty has a stabilizing influence on our entire international position. It places us outside the fluctuations of great power policies; everywhere our position in the international field of force is known with precision. The treaty preserves our possibility of following basic courses of neutrality in disputes among the great powers. Simultaneously we have continuously developed our relations with the Nordic countries. Twenty years ago it was feared that conclusion of a security agreement with the Soviet Union could be in conflict with our Nordic orientation. Now we can observe that Nordic collaboration, in which we participate without reservations, has become just in the past few years closer and more varied than ever before.

Mrs. A. Miettinen
B. Halonen

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From Helsinki

Speech by Minister A. P. Volke
to Observance of Finnish-Soviet
Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation
and Mutual Assistance Anniversary

April 5, 1979
(summary)

It is desirable that all are not pleased with the favorable development of relations between our countries. We know that in Finland, and outside its borders, there are certain circles which would like to interfere with the successful development of Soviet-Finnish relations. They are trying by any means available to sow the seeds of hostility and suspicion in the relations between our nations. We are deeply convinced, however, that the progressive forces are much stronger than those that disturb the happy development of Finnish-Soviet relations.

Peaceful, constructive collaboration between the Soviet Union and Finland will develop also in future in all fields to the best interests of the Soviet and Finnish nations. All the prerequisites for it exist, and there are no reasons for any slight doubts or cooling of our relations, or for damage to or weakening of our friendship."

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From Helsinki

MEMORANDUM

April 7, 1949

Editorial

Excerpts translation

Outward evidence of friendly relations in connection with the celebration doubtless receives more than ordinary attention, when one sees in the background the cool period that prevailed in relations between our countries last fall. The situation is remedied in as much as it was not only in normalization of diplomatic relations and conclusion of a trade agreement, but also in the bases and assurances presented at the time of the anniversary of the friendship and mutual assistance treaty.

How things stand was palpably demonstrated by the experience of last fall. The treaty can remain an empty shell unless there is mutual confidence in giving it life and making it fruitful. Hence the Prime Minister's observation that the preservation of confidence is a national interest for us, which can never be endangered. We must learn and remember to act accordingly.

When we consider this matter, we have reason to point out that it is not only a question of our confidence in our neighbor, but shows all our neighbor's confidence in us. In this connection we must bear in mind that when in our opinion there seems to be no cause for confidence being undermined and suspicion being aroused, it may be that the opinion of the neighbor on the situation and its features differs quite radically from our own.

When President Kekkonen returned from his Leningrad journey, he pointed out that during his discussion with the Soviet Prime Minister he had received the impression that the article of last fall had been deeper than was thought before. This evidently meant that Soviet confidence in us had suffered more than we could perceive in the light of what had happened. In our opinion subsequent developments have shown this in a certain way. The normalization of diplomatic relations and the signing of the trade agreement are already signs that our relations have returned to the right lines. However, it could still be sensed and even seen that the Soviet side has not forgotten altogether the cold spell of last fall and that it follows with a certain watchfulness political developments in our country. In the most recent example we can point out the article published by Pravda. Many circles in our country are of the opinion that the situation of some months ago is no longer worth remembering. This is a wrong point of departure. On the contrary, in our opinion we must bear in mind the lessons of last fall and take care that no such period of distrust develops again. In the same time we must work deliberately and seriously to remove entirely the remains of the past cool period.

Mr. M. Easton

G. Hillman

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From Helsinki

HUSSI SUOMI

April 7, 1959

Material

(transmission)

"In short eight the Prime Minister's analysis seemed to be quite correct, but without any in the matter shows that this kind of conception is based only on half-truths. We all know that the most difficult and greatest task during the post-war period was the necessity, which ruled the entire country's political life, of getting our foreign political relations to correspond to our position as the neighbor of a great eastern power. It has been and still is the first of our foreign political problems. But didn't we as our forefathers have the same problem 150 years ago? It may be that Finland was then not nationally independent, but only internally independent, an autonomous state. It is true that when we were a Grand Duchy attached to Russia, we were neither allowed nor able to have our own foreign policy in the proper sense of the word, but the leading principle in our political life in the 19th century was to avoid disagreements with Russia and the main task was to create such relations that Russia could not only tolerate Finland's special position but that it would even see that this was the most favorable alternative for itself.

The problem confronting our nineteenth century 150 years ago can well be compared to the situation we found ourselves in by the end of the Second World War when, in order to maintain our existence, we had to start re-establishing relations with our great neighbor. It would be clearing one's eyes to one of the most important phases in our history, if we did not admit that our leading men during the time of autonomy managed to achieve good relations with the West until the "most years" in a way that posterity can hardly overestimate. There was foreign policy enough, and the 19th century prepared a foundation not only for our independence but also for the line which we had to adopt 15 years ago for the sake of our own national interests. J.K. Paasikivi never concealed the fact that his attitude in foreign affairs, especially as regards our relations with our eastern neighbor, was an inheritance from the 19th century so-called old-Finnish policy. We have good reason to ask what would have happened to us, if our people had not had the recent experience of living as Russia's neighbor and if after the last Continuation War we had not had to put at the head of the state a man who took his foreign political line from the history of our own country. The difficulties of our adjustment surely would have been incomparably greater and perhaps the whole existence of our people might have been subjected to internal dangers, if we had not had as an inheritance an understating, perhaps not consciously but at least intuitively, of what the position of neighbor to a great country demands of our country and its policy.

Although it is hardly possible to speak of the general capacity of a people in foreign affairs, the vitality of the Finnish people in this respect is shown by the fact that it could adjust itself to the post-war foreign

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policy by unanimously supporting the leaders of the State. This was necessary because without the support of public opinion no democratic system can pursue a consistent foreign policy. The transfer from the world of illusions to the meager soil of realities is not a painless change, especially for a people which has built the independent life trusting in international rights and considering that each sovereign state and people is equal. But it was possible for a people that was earlier torn from real life the impermanent of these values is the cold conflict of power politics.

Our relations with the East have been and will be the most central problem of our foreign policy, but the solution has been facilitated by the fact that our people were mature enough to realize what was required to maintain our special position both in the time of autonomy and as an independent state. The feeling of foreign political responsibility in our country is by no means as fresh as the legacy of the recent war. Nor was there any real change in our position as the neighbor of a great people because we became an independent state. This was Paasikivi's opinion. The Paasikivi Society, which the present Prime Minister also belongs, would have very good reason to study more closely this varied and interesting question.

Dr. M. E. Hinton

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